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*Antient GAELIC POEMS respecting the Race of the FIANS,  
collected in the HIGHLANDS of SCOTLAND in the  
Year 1784. By M. YOUNG, D. D. M. R. I. A.*

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I N T R O D U C T I O N.

THE great interest which has for some years been taken in the controversy concerning the authenticity of Mc. Pherson's *Read April 17, 1786.* Ossian made me desirous of collecting all the information in my power, during an excursion through the Scottish Highlands in the summer of 1784. The following poems are part of the collection which I made at that time; and notwithstanding Mr. Hill has done so much towards bringing this warmly contested question to a decided issue, I imagined they might throw some new and additional light on the subject. I have therefore ventured to lay them before the Academy, with translations, and a few explanatory notes.

MR. Mc. Pherson is by many supposed to be the sole and original author of the compositions which he has published as  
(F 2) translations

translations of the works of Ossian; this charge I am enabled to refute, at least in part, having fortunately met with the originals of some of them. Mr. Macpherson, I acknowledge, has taken very great liberties with them; retrenching, adding, and altering as he judged proper: But we must admit that he has discovered great ingenuity in these variations.

MR. Hill, in his letters on this subject, having taken notice of the manner in which these translations were made, according to Mr. Smith's own confession (a gentleman who has likewise published a very elegant and beautiful collection of poems attributed to Ossian and other Highland bards) namely, "that Mr. Macpherson compiled his publications from those parts of the Highland songs which he most approved, combining them into such forms as, according to his ideas, were most excellent, retaining the old names and leading events," complains, that until the originals are produced, no man can tell what is Ossian's and what is Macpherson's.

THIS charge seems indeed to be an unanswerable objection to the form in which these translations have been given to the public. The manners, customs, laws, the state of arts and sciences amongst the antient tribes of these countries; the order, imagery, and connection of their poetical remains, are the great objects of enquiry to the curious. They have therefore long been anxious to see, either the very poems themselves in their primitive form, or such translations as have adhered faithfully to them. Until this be done, it will certainly be impossible to distinguish the ancient from the modern, the real from the fictitious; and therefore,

fore, however we may admire them as beautiful compositions, we can never rely on their authority, in any question of history, antiquity or criticism. Mr. Mc. Pherson, I must also allow, is liable to censure for having altered the date of his originals, as well as their matter and form, having given them a much higher antiquity than they are really entitled to. On this ground it is that he studiously suppresses all mention of St. Patrick, whose name frequently occurs in these poems, and only occasionally alludes to him under the character of a Culdee, or one of the first Christian missionaries into this country; for any mention of St. Patrick would have induced us to suspect, that perhaps these poems were not in truth the compositions of Ossian, but of those Fileas who in later times committed to verse the traditional relations of his exploits. We cannot adopt the opinion of some of the advocates for Mr. Mc. Pherson, that he has only omitted such passages as are of modern fabrication, and retained the genuine lines of Ossian alone: and even granting that he had the faculty of distinguishing, by some unerring criterion, the genuine composition of Ossian, he can never assure us, that he has so thoroughly attained the spirit of the bard, as that we may justly place his own insertions and additions on the same level with them. He ought to have permitted the world to judge in these cases for themselves; and when he professed himself to be merely a translator, it should seem he transgressed the limits of his province, when he presumed either to add to or mutilate the originals. Of the degree of this stretch of his prerogative we may form some conjecture from the following circumstance: One of the professors of the University of Glasgow, having

having entertained some doubts of the authenticity of the translation, wrote to Mr. Mc. Arthur, minister of Mull, whose name has been mentioned in the course of this controversy, requesting that he would send him some of the originals from which the translation had been made. Mr. Mc. Arthur, in his answer, told the professor “ that there were many of the spurious Irish songs wandering through the country ; but to satisfy his scruples he sent him the four following fragments, as extracts from the genuine poems of Ossian :”

## F R A G M E N T I.

Gum be fin an tuirlean teann  
 Mar dhean a bheireadh da chiad ord  
 Cath fuileach an da ri  
 Gum bu guineach bri an colg,  
 Air bristeadh don fgiathaibh deirg  
 Air eirigh dam feirg 's dam fraoch  
 Hilg iad aim fios gu lar  
 'S thug iad spairn an do laoch  
 Cath fuileach fin an da ri  
 Sann linne bu chian an clofs  
 Bha clachan is talamh trom  
 Am ofgladh fuidh bhonn an cos.

*See Fingal, B. 5, description of the fight between  
 Fingal and Swaran.*

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T II.

Seachd altruin Lochlain lain  
 Diongaidh mise fath gun fgeilg,  
 Se thuir an Tofcar bu mhor pris  
 Luigear chugamfa Ri Innse Tore,  
 E fein 'fa dha chomhairleach dheug  
 'S leigear eidir mi fein s'an cofg.  
 Iarla Mugha ga mor a ghlonn,  
 Se thuir Diarmaid donn gun ghuin,  
 Coisgidh mise fin gar fein  
 Air mo tuitidh mi fein air a fhon :  
 Se feumachas ghabhas fein  
 Ge 'ta mi mar chi tu mi nochd,  
 Ri Tearmain na'n comhrag teann  
 'S gu'n fgarain a cheann r'a chorp.  
 Beiridh beannachd, beiridh buaidh  
 Thuir Mac Cumhail nan gruidh dearg,  
 Mac fin ri Lochlain nan stuadh  
 Diongaidh mise ga mhor fhearg.

*See B. 5, Fingal on the same subject.*

F R A G M E N T III.

Cha choineadh bean a mac fein,  
 Cha mho choineadh fear a bhrathair,  
 Na bha fin gu leir mun teach  
 Bha fuin uile caoineadh Ofair.

THEN,

“ THEN,” says Mr. Mc. Arthur, “ follows Oscar’s own speech :”

Donnalich na’n con re’m thaobh,  
 Agus burich nan sean laoch,  
 Is gul a bhannail mu’n feach  
 Gur e sud a chradh mi’m chriodh ;  
 Cha do fhidir duine riamh  
 Criodha feola bhi am chliabh  
 Ach criodhe do chuibhne cuir.

“ THE *cuibhne cuir* is the cast horn of a deer,” says he, “ and is  
 “ reckoned extremely hard.”

*See the death of Oscar, B. I, Temora.*

#### F R A G M E N T IV.

Guibeadh tu fin is ceud each  
 Is fear ris an deachaidh frian,  
 Is ceud marcadh air am muin  
 Len earra fhroil on laffadh grian :  
 Gheibeadh tu fin is ceud corn  
 Ni don uisge ghorm an fion,  
 Ge be afda dh’ olas deach  
 Cha d’ theid a dhochartas am mead.  
 — Mur gabh tu fin —  
 Thoir leat do bhean, ’s dean ruinne fithe.

*See the battle of Lora.*

THE first and second fragments are extracted from the poem  
 entitled *Offin agus an Clerich*, which is in Mr. Hill’s collection,  
 and

and is current in Ireland \*. The third is taken from the *Marbh-rann Ofsair*; and the fourth from the poem entitled *Oran eadar Ailte agus do Maronnan*, a copy of which is amongst the Irish manuscripts in the library of the college of Dublin. It appears, therefore, that these spurious Irish ballads, as they are called by Mr. Mc. Pherfon and Mr. Mc. Arthur, are the very originals out of which the former compiled his Offian.

I WAS much surprized to find, that out of so large a work as the Temora, Fingal, and all the other shorter poems, Mr. Mc. Arthur should happen to select only such passages as occurred in the Erse songs which fell into Mr. Hill's hands or mine. This seems to indicate that the foundation of Mr. Mc. Pherfon's Offian is much narrower than, perhaps, we might otherwise have suspected.

IN fragment the first, Mr. Mc. Arthur has multiplied two hammers into an hundred, by inserting the word *chiad*: Though this be not so just as the original, yet it is a grander image, and more agreeable to Mr. Mc. Pherfon's translation.

IN fragment the second, for *Manus Mac Gharra nan Sloigh*, he substitutes *Mac sin ri Lochlain nan stuagh*; because Manus, a name of later times, does not occur in Mc. Pherfon.

THE following poems are transcribed letter for letter from the copies now current in the Highlands, except so far as they

\* A beautiful copy of this poem is preserved in the library of the university of Dublin; it is entitled *Laoi Mhanuis Mhoir*. A mutilated copy of it is printed in the Perth edition, p. 18, under the title of *Combrag Fheinn agus Mhanuis*.



have been corrected by the edition lately published at Perth, of which I shall have occasion to make further mention hereafter. In other places, therefore, they will be found very incorrect: But this cannot be an object of surprize; for as the Erse was not a written language 'till within these few years, there were no means of forming any standard for the writer; the orthography, therefore, depended on his own fancy. But after the Irish Bible was printed in the Roman letter by Mr. Kirke, in the year 1690, for the use of the Highlands, where the Irish character was unknown\*, and other religious tracts had been published, there was then formed a kind of standard; and if we may reason from the remarkable improvement which has since† taken

\* The title-page runs in the following words: “ *Tiomna nuadh, &c. noch* “ *ata anios ar mhaithe choitchinn Gaoidhealtacht Albann, athruigte go haireach* “ *as an litir Eireandha, go mion-litre shoi-leighidh Romhanta, &c. le R. Kirke,* “ *M. A. bli. 1690;*” that is, “ *The New Testament, &c. which now, for the* “ *public good of the Gaels of Scotland, is carefully altered from the Irish letter* “ *to the neater Roman letter, which is more easily read, &c. by R. Kirke, in the* “ *year 1690.*” On this title-page we may observe, that the Irish letter in the year 1690 was unknown, at least generally, in the Highlands; and that the Highlanders have the epithet *Alban* attributed to them in direct contradiction to the assertion of Mr. Mc. Pherson, who tells us, that they are called *Gael* emphatically, but that the Irish have the epithet of *Eirinnach* added to distinguish them from the original stock; whereas we here find that the distinguishing epithet is applied to the Highlanders, and therefore, as far as this argument goes, it proves Ireland to be the mother country.

† Mr. Mc. Pherson once was of opinion, that the beauty of Erse writing consisted in its “ not being bristled over with unnecessary, quiescent consonants, like the Irish,” as he has expressed himself in his notes on the 7th B. of Temora. But the learned Colonel Vallancey, to whom the Celtic literature of this country owes so much,

taken place, we may soon expect to see the Erse restored to that original purity which it possesses in the mother country.

IN the annexed translations, elegance of expression has not been sought after, my only wish being to give a clear and faithful idea of these antient songs. In many places I fear they may be incorrect: This is partly to be attributed to the corrupt and uncertain orthography of the originals; and partly to my imperfect knowledge of the language, in which I by no means pretend to be skilful. However, upon the whole, I believe no errors of material consequence have escaped me; but if there be such, the originals are at hand by which they may be corrected.

much, shewed him how thoroughly he was mistaken in this matter: and the beauty of Erse orthography, as may be seen in the late publications at Perth, is now rightly thought to consist in its conformity with Irish, and to its being bristled with those very consonants which to Mr. Mc. Pherson appeared to be so great a deformity.

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OSSIAN'S COURTSHIP *of* EVIRALLIN\*.

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HE is a dog<sup>a</sup> who is not compliant—But I tell you, wanton girl, I once was valiant in battle, though now I am worn out with years. When we went to the lovely Eir of the shining hair, the maid of the white hand, the disdainful favourite of Cormac, we went to Loch Lego, twelve men the most valiant beneath the sun<sup>b</sup>. Would you know our determined resolution? It was to make cowards fly before us. Bran, the son of Leacan, mildly but firmly saluted the noble and valiant band, that never was stained by any disgrace. He then enquired of us, in friendly terms, the occasion of our coming? Caoilte answered for us, “to ask your daughter.”

\* The original of this poem is given very correctly in the collection of Gaelic poems, published in Perth in 1786, by Mr. Gillies, an active and spirited printer, to whom the Erse language is, on many accounts, much indebted.

<sup>a</sup> The opening of this poem is very obscure; however, the tradition, handed down together with it, clears up the difficulty. Ossian, when advanced in years, being oppressed with extreme hunger, had recourse to a young woman who had often supplied him with milk. She made him some proposal which did not suit the delicacy of his feelings; and, on his refusal, she called him an old *dog*. This song was his reply to her on that occasion.—We cannot too much admire the ingenious

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SUIREADH OISEIN *air* EAMHAIR-ALUINN.

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**I**S Cuth-duine far nach ionmhuin  
 Deirimfe riutfa nighean iunnfai,  
 Gu'n raibh mi 'm dhea laoch air bheirt eile,  
 Ge ta mi 'm dheann laoch fan latha-fo'.  
 Latha gu'n deachaidh leinn  
 Eamhair aluinn fholt-ghrinn,  
 Nighean bu gheal-lamhach glac,  
 Leannan coigrich Chormaig.  
 Ghluais finn gu foith Locha Leige  
 An da fhear-dheug a' b' fhear foi 'n ghrein,  
 Ge b'e dh' fhidireadh ar run,  
 Romhain bu theichmheach droch cuth.  
 Bheannuich an fin Bran Mac Leacan  
 D'an-t' fluagh aluinn, ard, gheal-ghlacach  
 Gu narach, treoireach, neo-mheata,  
 Nach do phill scannal no ascal.  
 Dh' fharaid e dh' inn, an gloir bhinn,  
 Ciod e an taife mu'n d' thainig finn?  
 Caoilte fhreagair air ar ceann,  
 A dh' iarraidh do nighin ortfa.

genious and poetical manner in which Mr. Mc. Pherfon has introduced this little poem, as an episode, in the 4th Book of Fingal.

Mr. Mc. Pherfon insists, without any authority from the original (see the edition of Perth) that these were *sons of streamy Morven*, in order to confirm his erroneous opinion, that Ossian was also of that country.

BRAN. For whom do you ask her?

CAOILTE. For the noble Offian, son of Fin.

BRAN. And you shall not be denied, O valiant chief, renowned in battle.

THEN Bran said, and he did not speak a falsehood, "if I had twelve daughters, such is his fame amongst the Fians, "Offian should have the first." The bright apartment, constructed of polished brown stone, was opened to us. Amaze filled us all when we beheld the lovely Evir of the golden curled hair. When the noble Evir saw Offian, son of Fin, chief of the Fians, the maid of the beauteous countenance gave the love of her soul to the valiant son. We then went to Drum-da-horc, where Cormac waited boldly for us with seven well-armed companies.

. . . . .  
 . . . . .

THE army of Cormac, confident of success, appeared on the mountain like a bright flame of fire. The warlike Cormac led on eight champions, equal in deeds of fame, of the race of the Firbolgs; Macolla, and Durra of wounds, the son of the valiant Toscair, and Taog, stout Freafdal, the son of a king; Daire of great courage in action; Daol, greatly perseverant in the combat, and the standard of the warlike Cormac in his hand. The noble Offian led on eight heroes, all equal in the rough battle, however desperate. Mulla, Mac-Scein, and Fial;

Co dha ta fibh ga h' iarraidh ?  
 Do dh' Oifein uafal mac Fheinn ;  
 'Si mo nearac a gheabh thu,  
 A Loich laidir long-phortaich.  
 Labhair Bran 's ni dubhairt breug,  
 Ge do bhiodh agam da nighin deug,  
 Aig feabhas do chluith san Feinn,  
 Bhiodh a ceud nighean aig Oifein.  
 Dh' fhofgladh dhuinn an Grianan corr,  
 Air a thuthadh do chloth dhuinn,  
 Lion meanmna finn uile,  
 'G amharc Eamhair chas-fholt bhuidhe.  
 'Nuair a chunnairc Eamhair fhial  
 Oifein Mac Fhinn flath na 'm Fiann,  
 Thug an ribhinn a b' aille dreach  
 Gaol a h anma d' an dea' mhac.  
 Gu'n ghluais finn gu Druim-da-thorc,  
 'S bha Cormac romhain na Long-phort  
 'Se dar feitheamh gu dana  
 Le feachd catha d'an dea' mhalaidh.

. . . . .  
 Sluagh Chormaig gu'n do-chas  
 Aig na ghabh an sliabh bla-lafair.  
 Ochd-fhear do bhi aig Cormag eruinn  
 Ionnann ann gnìomh, dh' Fhearaibh-Bolg,  
 Mac Colla is Daire nan creuchd,  
 Mac Toscair treun agus Taog :  
 Freasdal baghach mac an Rìgh,  
 Daire na'n gnìomh bu mhor agh,  
 Daol bu mhaith fulang 'fa chuing,  
 'S meirge Chormaig cruinn na laimh.  
 Ochd fhear bhi aig Oifein ard,  
 Ionnann fa chath gharg gu dhian  
 Mulla mac Scein agus Fial,

the honest Scelacha, a chief of the Fians; Fillan, and bearded Cairioll; Dumarivan, whose sword was not gentle; and Ogar<sup>c</sup>, leading on his band, advanced against the Firbolgs. Toscar fought, Daol fought, face to face, in the presence of the armies: The contest of these two valiant chiefs was as the waves that are poured out by the wind upon a rocky shore—It was the conflict of two lions<sup>d</sup>. Toscar did not draw his dagger to wound; and though the skill of the combatants was great, the warm blood gushed from their wounds in rapid streams. Toscar remembered his dagger, a weapon prized by the valiant hero; he plunged it nine times in the side of Daol. For a little time Daol continued the fight. This contest stunned the armies, like the sound of a sledge upon the anvil; but Ossian gained every moment some advantage in the severe conflict. Ossian cleft fifty shields upon the mountain; and Cormac, son of Art, broke fifty blue swords upon the hill. I cut off the head of Cormac there upon the mountain, before the fall of night. I then returned to the prince<sup>e</sup> of Ireland, the hero's head in my hand by the hair.

<sup>c</sup> Mr. McPherson insists, as before, without any authority from the original (see the edition of Perth) that Ogar was from *the hills of Arduen*.

<sup>d</sup> This does not very well accord with the criticisms of Dr. Blair: "Every country," says he, "has a scenery peculiar to itself, and the images of a good poet will exhibit it. The introduction of *foreign images* betrays a poet copying, not from nature, but from *other writers*. Hence so many lions, tigers, eagles and serpents which we meet with in the fables of modern poets. Ossian is very correct in this particular. His imagery is *without exception* copied from that face of nature which he *saw before his eyes*." On this occasion we must observe, that Dr. Blair's criticisms are fitted to Mr. McPherson's Ossian, not to the originals, with which he had no acquaintance.

<sup>e</sup> By

Sgeulaiche fìor fìath na fìinn.  
 Faolan agus Cairioll cas,  
 Dubh mac Ribhinn nìor thais colg;  
 Tofcar an tus, fìar a chlann,  
 Chaidh fìo 'n chrann an ceann na 'm Fearbolg.  
 Thachair Tofcar thachair Daol,  
 Taobh re taobh an lath'r an t' fluagh,  
 Bha comhrag an da churaidh chaoimh,  
 Mar gu'n doirteadh gaath a cuan :  
 Bu chomrag dha leomhain fìn,  
 'S cha 'n iarradh e scian d an guin,  
 Ge bu mhaith faoirfinneachd na'm fear,  
 Bu cheo na taofgaibh amfuil.  
 Chuimnich Tofcar air an fcein,  
 Arm bu mhian leis an fhear mhaith,  
 Chuir e naoi guine an taobh Dhaoil,  
 Sealan beag mu'n chlaon an cath.  
 Bha comhraig ag borbaidh an t' fluaigh,  
 Mar fhuaim uird le dearnaibh lamh  
 Ag earraidh gu Oifein gach uair  
 'S an cath cruaidh do bheir e dhoibh.  
 Do scoilt Oifein air an t' fliabh,  
 Caogad sciath gu Cormag cruinn,  
 'S gu 'n bhris Cormag mac Art,  
 Caogad lann ghlas air an druim.  
 Thugas an ceann do Chormag cruinn  
 Air an t' fliabhfa gus a nochd,  
 'S gu 'n do ghluais gu Flaith Fail,  
 'S an ceann fìn am lamh air fholt.

\* By *Flaith Fail* in the original, *the prince of Ireland*, is probably meant Fion-Mac-Cumhal, who is often, in these ancient poems, called *Fionn Fail*, and *Flaith na Bhfian*; that is, *Fionn of Ireland*, and *prince of the Fians*.



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*The* LAMENTATION *of the* WIFE *of* DARGO<sup>a</sup>.

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I AM the wife of Dargo, son of Collath, a man who knew no fault. Every hero must at length be stretched out in death—  
forrowful am I to-night !

DARGO, son of Collath, branch of the Clouds ; beautiful amidst a thousand ; anger never sat upon his countenance : Dargo, that fell by a boar !

WITH his hawk and two dogs he collected the game in the fields : Dargo, who took pleasure in them, to-night is buried in the grave !

PLEASANT and lovely was thy cheek ; it did not betray fear in battle ; thy heart was generous and open, and thy complexion brighter than the sun !

NEVER didst thou refuse thy assistance to the distressed, nor protect the unjust ; wert guilty of no falsehood, nor ever didst thou decline the combat of arms with any man.

<sup>a</sup> See the notes on the poem called Calthou and Colmal, by M'Pherson. The original of this poem is very correctly printed in the Perth edition of Gaelic poems.

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M A R B H R A N D E I R G.

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**A**N Dearg Mac Collath, gur mise a bhean,  
 Sud am fear nach diddir lochd ;  
 'Sni bhuil faoidh nach dfhuair a leireadh,—  
 'Struagh ata me fein a nochd !  
 Dearg Mac Collath craobh na neol,  
 An ti le theinte gu caoin cruth ;  
 B' ionmhuin an aoigh nach luigh fearg air ;  
 Chlaoidheadh an Dearg leis a mhuic.  
 Sud a Sheabhac 'fa dha choin  
 Leis an goirt cron na fealg ;  
 An ti leis am b'ionmhuin an triuir  
 Cuirthi a nochd fan uir an Dearg !  
 B' ionmhuin taghaid mhin Dearg mhor  
 B' deacor an clo 'fan chath ;  
 Marri criodhe farfing faoligh  
 Bu ghealach no grian do dhath !  
 Nior dhiult thu duine mad chuid,  
 Nior roinn breug 'f ni dhidean lochd ;  
 Ni mo a dhuilt thu comhrag arm  
 O neach do bhi anam na chorp !

NEVER didst thou refuse, nor never ask a favour : I never saw a form more fair and lovely than Dargo's.

I AM the daughter of Laoman, son of Ruo, for whom gold was wrought with much art : Though many valiant men courted me, I chose to be the wife of Dargo.

THE son of wealthy Saine was my suitor ; he was rich in goods and possessions ; but the sword of Dargo, in the time of spoil, cared not whether horses or oxen were his plunder.

I AND my hero were contented on the mountain of Noc-Lartho : I will be laid in the grave to-night, and my body shall not be separated from Dargo's.

Nor dhiult e daoine mu ni,  
 'Sni n' diar ni air neach fui n' ghrein ;  
 An ti bu mho 'f bu mhaith dealbh dhin  
 'S ni 'n faiceas an ach Dearg fein !  
 'S mi ninghean Laoman mhic Ruaidh  
 Don ti na freantigh oir le ceard ;  
 Ge bu lionmhor ga m' iarruidh faoi,  
 Bear leam thi m' mhnaoi aig an Dearg  
 Mac Saoigne na iognadh dho bhi,  
 B' ionmhuin ri air fonn 'f air fealoh ;  
 Guilla gun ghaol bo na eachaibh  
 Re am criachach cloidheamh Dheirg !  
 Cha bi me s'an laoch a riarach  
 Air an tliabh fin cnoc an Leirg ;  
 Sgu m' bith me fan uaigh a nochd,  
 'S cha fgathrar mo chorp re Deirg !——

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*The COMBAT of CON<sup>a</sup> Son of DARGO, and GAUL  
Son of MORNÈ.*

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THE tale of Con, son of Dargo, who, filled with heavy wrath, went to revenge his innocent father<sup>b</sup> on the Chiefs of Ireland<sup>c</sup>.

ST. PATRICK<sup>d</sup>. Relate, oh! thou of pleasant tales, the story of the valiant Con, the brave and beautiful hero. Who was greater in action, oh! Ossian of sweet words, or who more beautiful in countenance, than the son of Dargo!

OSSIAN. The valiant champion sat upon a hill before us; he approached us in wrath, like an eagle piercing through the clouds.

<sup>a</sup> He is called *Cuthon* by Mr. Smith. See *Gaelic antiquities*, p. 293. This entire story has been so altered by Mr. Smith, that nothing remains in common with the original but the names. See the edition of Perth, p. 39.

<sup>b</sup> His father had been slain in single combat by Gaul, son of Mornè.

<sup>c</sup> Mr. Smith has perverted this passage, in order to deprive Ireland of the honor, *fi qua est ea gloria*, of being the residence of Fingal's heroes. The line, which in the original runs thus:

*Air*

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SGEULACHD *air* CHONN MAC *an* DEIRG.

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SGEUL air Chonn Mac an Deirg  
 Air a lionadh le trom fhearg,  
 Dol a dhioladh athar gun fheall,  
 Air mor mhaithaibh na Eirion.  
 Aithris thufa, Shuairce, Shog'radhach,  
 Sgeul air Chonn fear fearrail,  
 An fonn calma, 's è caomh, ceannail,  
 Co 's mo glonn na 'n Dearg mor  
 Offian nam briathra binn bheoil;  
 Ri mbionnan dealbh dho na dreach  
 'S do n' Chonn mhor, mhear, mheanmnach?  
 Shuidh è air an tulaich gar coir  
 Am fù curanta ro mhor,  
 'S ghabhadh e le chleasaibh garg  
 Am bailraibh nan iarmailte.  
 Chuaith e m' frithlannaibh na neul,

*Air mor maithibh na Eirion,*

He alters to the following:

*Air uaisibh 's air maithibh na Feine.*

And the like change is made in the edition of Perth.

<sup>a</sup> This introduction of St. Patrick is omitted in the Perth edition.

Dismay seized us at his appearance. He exceeded every one in beauty, Con of the sharp-edged weapons; his purple cheek like polished yew; his eye quick moving under his narrow eye-brows; his hair like wrought gold falling in ringlets down the back of the valiant chief; the envenomed dagger to wound his adversary, the cause of great woe; and the sword hanging by the side of his shield. He obtained the victory in every contest by his valour and great deeds. He took his strong armour with speed, and spoke of taxes and great tribute. I tell you truly, oh! Patrick<sup>e</sup>, though it be disgraceful to confess it, that greater fear never seized the Fians than when they beheld Con in his wrath rushing on like a rapid flood; so great was his rage against us to revenge the death of his father.

By the counsel of the valiant son of Fin, of the clear voice, we sent the sweet-tongued Fergus to inquire of the finewy son of Dargo. Fergus saluted, and Con, in due order, answered. Then Fergus, the sweet-tongued bard, the messenger of Fin, said “ for what cause have you come to Ireland<sup>f</sup> ?”

<sup>e</sup> This address of Ossian to St. Patrick is omitted in the Perth edition.

<sup>f</sup> Fingal and his heroes are here expressly attributed to Ireland; but the line is altered into the following, in the Perth edition:

*Ciad é fath do thuruis do'n tír ?*

j. c. For what cause have you come to this country ?

B' uamhas dhuinne bhi fui mhein ;  
 Nin aile neach ata fui n' ghrein  
 No Conn nan arm faobhar gheur.  
 Gruaidh chorcair mar iubhar caoin,  
 Rofg chorrach ghorm na malla chaoil,  
 Folt or-cheard nan amlaibh grinn,  
 Gu mor, meanmneach, aithneach, aoibhin.  
 Lanna nimhe re leadairt chorp,  
 Le colg teagmhail na mor olc ;  
 Bhiodh a chloidheam re fga fgeith  
 Aig an laoch gun aimh-reite.  
 Buaidh gach ball an raibh e riamh,  
 Air gaifge, 's air mhor ghníomh  
 Gabhail a choimhlíon, neart gun fgiós ;  
 'Se labhairt geal 's mor chis.  
 Bheirínfin dhuit briathra cinnteach,  
 A Phadruic, ga nàr re innfeadh,  
 Gun do ghabh an Fhiann eagal uill,  
 Nach do ghabhas riamh roimh aon duine,  
 Rí faicfin dhoibh conbhach Chuin,  
 Mar ro tuill thuighean fui thuinn  
 Meud fhallachd an fhir dhuinn  
 An eiric athar a dhioladh.  
 Se comhairle a chinn doibh,  
 Deagh mhac fhinn on gloine gloir  
 Chuir ghabhail fgeul an fhir dhochdur,  
 Fearghus beul dearg binn-fhoclach.  
 Do mhac an Deirg bu gharg gleac  
 Bheannuigh Fearghus gu fíor-ghlic :  
 Fhreagair Conn e mar bu choir,  
 Fheargus fhileanta, deagh bheoil,  
 “ A ghabhail fgeul a thainig on Fhionn,  
 “ Cíod e fath do thuruis do dh' Eiríon ? ”



CON. "I will tell you, O Fergus, and then farewell—to  
 "revenge my father on the noble Fians of Ireland<sup>z</sup>. I demand  
 "the head of Fin and his two valiant sons, of Gaul and  
 "Criomthan, and the noble Art, and of all the tribe of Mornè;  
 "the head of Cormac, son of Art, and of Fin; and all the  
 "men in Ireland<sup>b</sup> from sea to sea shall with one accord obey  
 "me, or early in the morning five hundred must contend with  
 "me in the sharp and busy combat."

"What is thy message, Fergus," (said Fin, prince of the  
 host,) "from the great champion; tell us quickly, and do not  
 "conceal from us the evil?"

THIS, (says Fergus) is the answer of the great champion;—he  
 demands the combat of five hundred of your army in the morning  
 in the sharp and busy contest. "Then," replied five hundred of the  
 Fians, "to-morrow he shall not boast of his vigour;" but those  
 who engaged in the battle did not do as they had promised. Five  
 hundred fell round the son of Dargo, of the well-tempered sword,  
 and five hundred more, had they been there, would have been

<sup>z</sup> The Perth edition changes *A mbaithibh Fiann Eirion*, "the noble Fians of  
 "Ireland," into *O'r maithibh is or mor uaislibh*, "the nobles and great chieftains."

<sup>b</sup> Instead

CON. Bheirínfe mo fgeul dhuit,  
 Fheargus, agus b'annfa leat —  
 Eiric m' athar b'aill leam uaibhfe,  
 A mhaithibh Fiann Eirion.  
 Ceann Fhin 'sa dha mhic mhoir,  
 Ceann Ghuil, 's Criomthan, 's Artair,  
 S cinn chloinneadh Mórne uille,  
 Gun feachnadh aon duine.  
 Ceann Cormaic mhic Art 's Fhinn,  
 'S bfuill sibh an Eirion, o thuin gu tuinn,  
 A gheileach duin don aon chuim,  
 No comhrag cuig ceud uaibhfe,  
 Moch air maidin a maireach,  
 Gu comhrag meara didhalach.

FIN. Cia do fgeul on fhear mhor,  
 (Se labhair Fionn flath an t' floigh,)  
 Innis Fearghus e gu grud,  
 'S na ceil oirne a dhion-olc.

FERGUS. Se mo fgeulfa on fhear mhor,  
 Gur 'aill leis comhrag cuig ceud d'ar floigh,  
 A muigh air maidin a maireach,  
 Gu comhrag meara, didhalach.  
 'Se labhair cuig ceud d'ar Feine,  
 "Caifgear leinne a luathmhire."  
 Ach cha raibh mar a radh,  
 Do'n droing a chuaidh fan iomairt.  
 Le mac an Deirg bu chruaidhe lann,  
 Thuit air cuig ceud mu thiomchioll,  
 Cuig ceud eile, ged' bhi ann,

\* Instead of *Eirion*, "Ireland," the Perth edition substitutes *An tir uile*, "the whole land."

slain together. Con struck his shield and opposed his single hand to all. We chose seven score valiant men of the chiefs of our army to cut off the head of the son of Dargo. Then might you see Fion in heavy rage. Con rushed upon our men like a hawk upon a flight of small birds. Many were the groans and shouts; many were the dismembered hands and legs; many were the heads and bodies lying in heaps without distinction. Seven score valiant men fell by Con, which was the cause of great woe and sorrow. Then said bald Conan, son of Mornè, "Let me encounter this champion, and I will bring off the head of the furious and insulting Con." "Ill fortune attend you, bald Conan (said Oscar of great deeds) will you never lay aside your insolence? Never will you bring off the head of Con from the battle." The rash Conan, against the wishes of the Fians, advanced to meet the victorious Con; but his attempt was unfortunate. When Con of graceful form saw Conan seize his arms, he made but an half effort against the coward, who fled hastily from him. Often did he scream, and often shriek,

Gum bithead marbh air aon bhall ;  
 'S Conn a cailceadh a fgiath,  
 'S ire comhrag gu aon-riar.  
 Thagh finn feachd fichead fear mor,  
 Do mhaithibh teaghluich air floigh,  
 Thoirt a chinn do mhac an Deirg,  
 Gum faiceas Fion fui throm fhearg.  
 Thug e roimh ar fir an grain,  
 Mar feabhag roimh mhin ealt eun.  
 Iomadh och is gaire bhos,  
 Iomadh lamh agus le chos,  
 Iomadh cloiggion, iomadh ceann,  
 Cuirp gan coighleadh air aon bhall.  
 Thuit ar feachd fichead fear mor,  
 B' adhbhar tuirfe 's dobhron.  
 'N fin labhair Connan maol mac Morni,  
 CONAN. " Leighear mise thuig an ceudna,  
 " 'S gu m' buinnin an ceann deth,  
 " Do Chonn dimheafach ainteadh."  
 OSCAR. " Marbhaife ort a Chonnan maoil  
 " Nir fguireas tu dod lonan a chaoidh,  
 " Ni thugain tu an ceann do Chonn,"  
 (Se labhair Ofcar na mor g'lonn.)  
 Ghluaife Connan mu mhicheil  
 A dhaindeoin na Feine gu leir,  
 An codhial Chuinn bhuaghaich bhrais  
 Mar char tuadhail ga aimhleas.  
 'Nuair chunnairc Chonn bu chain dealbh,  
 Connan a dol an feilbh arm,  
 Thug e le-fic air an daor  
 'Se teicheadh da thigh gu falbh uaith.  
 'S iomadh scread, is iolach cruaidh,

and many were the blows that fell thick upon his cowardly head, when he was bound neck, hands and heels. “ Thanks to  
“ the hand that did this deed (said Fionn of majestic form)  
“ unprosperous has been your journey, O rash bald-headed  
“ Conan.” We then went, the chiefs of the Fianns, together  
in council to the house of my father.

FIN. “ O Gaul, son of Mornè, of great deeds and excellent  
“ understanding, who are accustomed to give reason for reason  
“ in all discourse, I pray you bring us boldly the head of that  
“ champion who thus insults you and the nobles of the Fianns,  
“ as you formerly brought us the head of his father<sup>1</sup>.”

GAUL. “ I will obey you in this, O Fin of soothing words ;  
“ let us leave our enmity and hatred<sup>\*</sup> behind us, and reunite  
“ in friendship. Skilful art thou in healing the wounds of the  
“ hostile mind. I and my warriors of strength shall serve you,  
“ O noble prince of the Fians.”

GAUL went like a firm bulwark in the presence of the army ;  
the red countenance of the hero in the beginning of the com-  
bat was like a spreading fail.

<sup>1</sup> The combat in which Gaul performed this exploit is related in an Irish poem called *Laoibh an Deirg* ; and the music to which it was antiently sung is still preserved in the Highlands of Scotland, and has been lately published in Mc. Donald’s collection of Highland airs.

<sup>\*</sup> There

'S ioma cnap is maile is meall,  
 A dha fuas air a dhroch ceann ;  
 Ar maol Chonnan gu reamhar,  
 'Sa chuig caol fan aon cheangal.  
 " Beannachd aig an laimh rinn fud,"  
 (Se labhair Fionn a chro-shnuagh)  
 " Gu ma turus gun eirigh dhuit,  
 " A Chonan è-ceilidh gun fholt."  
 Sheall fin an fin air a cheil,  
 Moran do mhaithaibh na Feine  
 Retir theaghlaich m' athair fein,  
 B' fhear meoghair is deagh mhein.

FIN. " Gholl mhic Mhorne na mor ghniomh  
 " O's tu a chleachd comhradh air comhradh riabh,  
 " On ti ata bagradh ort,  
 " 'Sair moran do mhaithaibh na Feine ;  
 " Gun tugadh an ceann gu fearrail dheth,  
 " Mar thug thu do athair roimhe."

GAUL. " Gu 'd deanainfa fin duit Fhinn,  
 " Fhir nam briathra bla binn,  
 " Cuirreamaid fuarachd 's folachd air cul,  
 " 'S bimaide uill a dh' aon run :  
 " Gud mharbhadh tu m' fhionn  
 " Gun di feachadh aon duine ;  
 " Bhithin fein 's mo treine leat,  
 " A righ na Feinne, 'gad chabhair."  
 Ghluais Gholl, na chulaidh chruidh,  
 Ann an lathair na mor shluaigh ;  
 Sgu 'm bu geall dearg gnais an fhir  
 Le feol gairge an tus iargail.

\* There had been violent disputes between the families of Fin and Gaul, son of Mornè.

Fierce was the encounter of the two champions. The ground shook with the violence of their blows. The Fians stood listening. Many sparks of red fire flew over their well-helmed heads, they remembering their ancient enmity—streams of fire from their naked arms—streams of blood from their wounded bodies—showers of splinters from their shields of valour. Nine days they fought—mothers and sons were weary of the combat. At length the great Con fell by Gaul of wounds. Fin and the Fians of his train raised a shout of joy when they beheld Gaul the son of Mornè standing over the valiant Con, and Conan's foul disgrace revenged. Nine nights was the valiant Gaul curing of his wounds, listening to the song by day and night, and distributing rich presents to the skilful bards. Seven score and five hundred of the Fians fell by the great son of Dargo. Fin bewailed the loss.

Ghluais iad an ceann a cheile  
 Nan do churraidh bu ghairge cith :  
 A chuireadh an fhaich air bhall chrith,  
 Le beumaibh buille na 'm fear mor,  
 'Sa n Fhionn uile ga 'n eisteachd ;  
 'S iomadh caoir theine ruagh,  
 O bheul nan arm fhaobhar cruaidh,  
 Os cionn nan ceann bheartach corrach,  
 'S iad a cuimhneachadh na mor fholachd :  
 Cith teine on armaibh nochd,  
 Cith foladh do chneasaibh an cuirp,  
 Cith cailce do fgiathaibh an aigh,  
 Dol uatha 'fna h iormailte.  
 Naoi laethe 's aon tra deug  
 Bu tuirfeach mic agus mnai,  
 Gus an do thuit le Goll nam beum  
 Conn mor air lom eigin,  
 Gair aoibhnis thug an Fhionn,  
 Agus an Fiann a bhi gan reir,  
 Re faicfin dhoibh Ghuill mhic Mhorn,  
 An uachdar air Chonn treun togha,  
 S Conan ga thoirt a fas  
 An deigh lonnan a mhi ghrais.  
 Naoi naidhin do Gholl an aigh  
 Ga leigheas mun raibh e slan,  
 Ag eisteachd ceoil a dhoich fa la,  
 'Sa pronnadh or fa throm dhaimh.  
 Air feachd fichead 's air cuig ceud  
 Thuit dar feinne adhmhor dhearg,  
 'S bu grain air Fionn da reir.



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*The COMBAT of OSGAR and ILLAN, Son of  
the King of Spain.*

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ST. PATRICK. **O**H! noble Offian, son of Fin, that fittest  
upon the pleasant hill; valiant chief, I behold sorrow dwel-  
ling on thy brow.

OSSIAN. Is there not cause for my sorrow, <sup>a</sup>O Patrick!  
when I think upon the Fians who once used to meet toge-  
ther on this hill? One day, as we were all together, holy  
Patrick, of excellent judgment, the heroes of Fin were joy-  
ful. On that day, I say, when we were all together on this hill,  
where we used to assemble, we saw a solitary damsel coming  
toward us on the plain. Her countenance was lovely, her  
cheeks were red and white, and her neck above her fine gar-  
ments was brighter than the sun-beams.

<sup>a</sup> This prefatory dialogue of Offian with St. Patrick is omitted in the Perth  
edition, page 35.

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D A N *na h* I N G H I N.

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PATRICK. **O**ISSEIN uafal a mhic Finn  
 'S tu ad fhuidhe air an tulaich eibhin,  
 A laoich mhili nach meat  
 Gum faic mife bron air tinntin.

OSSIAN. Tha aobhar aig mo bron fein,  
 A Phadruic 's ni canam breug,  
 A bhi cuimhneach air Fiannaibh Fhinn,  
 Abhair an tulaich fa dhaon riar  
 Ladha bha finn uille araon,  
 Padruic naomha nam breath faor,  
 Chunnaic mife teaghlach Fhinn,  
 Gu mor meadhrach, mear, eibhin.  
 Ladha bha finn uile 'n Fhiann  
 Air an tulaich fa dfhann riar,  
 Chunnic finn aon bhean fa mhagh,  
 'S i tohd chugainne na haonar.  
 Bi a 'ninghean ab ailde fhuagh,  
 Bu geal is bu dearg a gruaidh ;  
 Bu ghile na gach gath greine,  
 A brag'ad fhuas fuidh caomh leine.

(K 2)

A golden neck-lace furrounded her soft neck, and polished bracelets of gold bound her arms, and her fair and lovely skin was covered with the softest fatten. Greater love seized all the heroes of Fin of Almhuin<sup>b</sup> for this damsel than ever they had felt before. The white-handed fair put herself under the protection of Fin, and of Gaul, that intrepid warrior, and of Osgar, the son of Ossian, and of valiant Chaol, the son of Rugar.

THE DAMSEL. "I put myself under your protection, Oh!  
"nobles of the Fians, princes and chieftains."

FIN. "Who pursues you, Oh! maid of the beautiful form?"

THE DAMSEL. "Nobles and princes of the Fians, the great and  
"warlike Illan pursues me, eldest son of the king of Spain<sup>c</sup>; and  
"much do I fear, Oh! Fians of Ireland<sup>d</sup>, the wounds and  
"destruction which this fierce warrior will bring upon you.  
"Wherever he goes, to the east or west, or to the four quar-  
"ters of the world, his sharp-edged weapon makes every foe  
"yield the victory."

<sup>b</sup> The palace of Fin-mac-Cumhal in Leinster, seated on the summit of the hill of Allen, or rather, as the natives of that country pronounce it, Allowin: The village and bog of Allen have thence derived their name. There are still the remains of some trenches on the top of the hill, where Fin-mac-Cumhal and his Fians were wont to celebrate their feasts. The country hereabouts abounds in wonderful tales of the exploits of these antient heroes. These two lines are omitted in the Perth edition.

<sup>c</sup> Instead

Bha dun don or 'ma hur bhrag'ad,  
 Bha slabhruidh oir caoin araidh,  
 Bha leine don 'tfrol a buire,  
 Leath ri cneas caoin, gradhach, cubhraidh.  
 Thug finne air trom ghaol uile  
 An teaghlach Fhinn fin a h Albhuin  
 Gun aon duine don Fheinn  
 Ga mhnaoi fein ach don ionbhuin.  
 Chuir i comraiche air Fiann  
 An ribhin is i gu bofgheal binn,  
 Chuir i comraiche eile air Goll,  
 Le fud laoch aluin nan sonn,  
 'S air Ofgar mac Oiffain eile,  
 'S air a Chaol chrodhach mac Ruighair.

AN INGHIN. “ Mo chomraich oirbh Fhiannaibh matha,  
 “ Eidir chlannaibh righ is fhathan.”

FION. “ Co tha torachd air do lorg  
 “ A ninghean ur is ailde colg.”

AN INGHIN. “ Tha fin a torachd orm fein  
 “ Fhir uafal is rioghail Feinn,  
 “ Iollan mor mileanta mear  
 “ Mac oidhre riogh na h Easpainde;  
 “ 'S eagal leamsa, Fhiannaibh Fhail,  
 “ Egar leadairt is gar doghrainn  
 “ Am fear mor, mileanta, treun,  
 “ Tha airm gu fiudhrannda rann gheur,  
 “ Cait an dimthigh e niar na noir,  
 “ Na o ceithir armdanaibh an domhain,  
 “ Aon duine nach faiceadh eanchin a chinn.”

<sup>c</sup> Instead of *Easpainde*, “ Spain,” the Perth edition substitutes *Iarfmàile*.

<sup>d</sup> Instead of *Fhiannaibh Fhail*, “ the Fians of Ireland,” the Perth edition substitutes *Fhianna matha*, “ the noble Fians.”

FIN. “ Oh ! fair damsel, we will not let him carry you away ;  
 “ sit down, and be of good courage, though your words are  
 “ terrible. This great man shall not carry you away, high as  
 “ your opinion is of his valour.”

WE saw the hero entering the harbour, and drawing his vessel to the shore. He approached us with fury ; he approached us with rage, like a sheet of unusual sparkling fire. He had on his well-made coat of mail ; his helmet was strong and variegated. His vizor, polished and set with precious stones, covered his fair countenance. His garments were of rich fatten, tied with filken strings. Two sharp-headed spears with barbs appeared over his shoulder. His polished and impenetrable shield was in his left hand. He rushed on with fury, and saluted not Fin or the Fians. He slew an hundred of the heroes of Fin, and slew the damsel. He bound Fellan, the son of Fin, and thrice nine of his valiant train. Illan was light and active, though covered over with heavy armour. Ofgar turned toward him on the plain ; my son swelled with heavy wrath, and demanded the combat of this resistless and beautiful champion. Illan turned toward my son, and fierce and furious was their encounter.

FION. “ Mun leigeadh mide leis thu ionbhuin,  
 “ Dean fa fuidhe air mo fgathfa,  
 “ A ninghean ga granda do chomhradh ;  
 “ Man tabhair am fear mor thu leis,  
 “ Ga mor leat do dhoigh as fheabhas.”  
 Chunnaic finne fada uain,  
 Fear mor is aig caitheamh a chuain,  
 A tarruing a luing gu traigh,  
 'Sa tohd chugainne le hanmein.  
 Gum be fud am fear mor malda,  
 Na stuagh theinigh, alluidh, allmarra,  
 Le fraoch feirge gu Fiannaibh Fhinn,  
 Se tohd mar chaoir theinne chugain.  
 Bha luireach ard, irfeach, uaibhreach,  
 Bha threin sgabal gu breac buailteach,  
 Bha cheannbheart chlochara, fheimhidh,  
 Os cinn aghaidh fhocruidhe mhin.  
 Bha eitidh don tfrol mun fhear  
 Ceamhfaiche fide ga cheangal.  
 A dha fhleagh om bun bu cruaidh roinn  
 Is iad nan cuilg sheafamh fuas ri ghualuinn.  
 Bha fgiath chruidh neam-bristeadh, blad, h,  
 Ann an dorn toifgeil a mhili.  
 Thug e ruadhar fir gun cheill,  
 Is cha do bheannuigh fe d' Fhionn na 'n Fheinn.  
 Marbh e ceud do Fhiannaibh Fhinn,  
 Agus mhairbhte leis an ionbhuinn.  
 Cheangail e Faodhlan mac Fhinn  
 Agus tri naodhnar ga luchd' leanmhuin,  
 Ga chinneach mor, meanmneach, mear.  
 'S bha Iollan gu harmach, eatrom.  
 Thiundaidh Ofgar air an leirg,  
 Mo mhac, is e lan do throm fheirg,  
 Sann an fin a dfhuabair e comhrag  
 On laoch bho fgeal, mhio-narach.  
 Thiundaidh Iollan ri mac fein,  
 Sgu ndeanta leo comhrag treun.

As torrents in the bottom of the vallies, so rapid were the streams of their blood. As sparks of fire from the furnace, so were the sparks from the swords of the contending heroes. Ofgar gave a deadly wound to armed Illan of the white teeth. So violent was the blow, it struck off the head of the king of Spain's son. His grave-stone is on this hill, O Mac-Alpin<sup>e</sup>. My words are true, O good Mac-Alpin of Almuin. Noble were the antient heroes, nor are they equalled by those who succeeded them. Blessings on the souls of the two, and blessings on the souls of the antient heroes.

<sup>e</sup> St. Patrick is here called Mac-Alpin, as he is frequently in these antient poems. Mr. Mc. Pherfon has retained this title, though he has suppressed the name of St. Patrick, in order to give his poems an air of higher antiquity. See *Berrathon*. "Tradition," says he, "has not handed down the name of this son of Alpin." But this address of Ossian to St. Patrick is entirely omitted in the Perth edition.

Be fud am fear mor, creamhach, cean-riabhach,  
 Beumnach, cofluath, ceimenach,  
 Ard, leimneach, ain-meafach.  
 Mar a fhruthadh a bhunn le gleann,  
 Bha fgrios am fola co-teann,  
 Na mar chaoir theinne teachd a teallach,  
 Toradh nan laoch namhadach.  
 Thug Osgar beum fear ghlan, fear,  
 Do Iollan armach, deud ghlan,  
 Se mhaidh e leis, a bheum granda,  
 Cean mic a righ na h Easpainde.  
 Is air 'n tullich fo ta leachd,  
 A mhic Alpin ha fo fìor,  
 Ha leachd a mhna air 'n taobh eile,  
 A dheagh Mhic-Alpin a t Almhuin.  
 Air linne gum bu mhaith iad,  
 'S nach raibh aon fhear dhiug ach fiad,  
 Beannachd air a nanam araon,  
 Is t'ugabh beannachd oile dhoibhfan.



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*The* INVASION *of* IRELAND *by* ERRAGON<sup>a</sup>.

---

ON a day when Patrick<sup>b</sup> had no psalms to sing, and had leisure for banqueting and discourse, he went to the house of Offian, the son of Fin, whose words were sweet to his ears.

PATRICK. We salute you, O chearful old man ; and have come to visit your dwelling, O valiant hero of the ruddy countenance, who never refused a request. We wish to hear related by you, O grandson of Cumhal of the strong sword, the greatest danger that befel the Fians since first you began to walk in their footsteps.

OSSIAN. I will freely relate to you, O Patrick of sweet psalms, the greatest danger that ever befel the Fians since the first origin of the heroes of Fin.

<sup>a</sup> Compare Mc. Pherfon's Battle of Lora with this poem, and the Perth edition of it, page 305.

<sup>b</sup> Mc. Pherfon, as usual, has here transmuted St. Patrick into a Culdee, and pretends that this poem is called, in the original, *Duan a Chuldich*, or the *Culdee's Poem*,

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*Oran eadar AILTE agus MAC-RONAIN air dhoibh  
fearg a ghabhail ri FIONN.*

---

**L**ATH gun rabh Padric no mhur  
Gun failm air uigh, ach bhi ag ol,  
Ghluais e a thigh Oifein mhic Fhinn,  
O fan leis bu bhinn a ghloir.

PATRICK. Umhlachd dhuitse a shean-fhir shuoirce,  
Ad iunnfaid air chuairt thainig fuinn,  
A laodhich mhilent as deirg dreach,  
Cha d' ear u riobh neach mu'd ne.  
Fios a bail luinn fhaotin uait  
Ogha Chuthaill is cruoigh colg,  
N teanntachd as moghadh 'n rabh 'n Fhionn  
O na ghin u riobh nan lorg.

OSSIAN. Dhinnfin sin duitse gun tamh,  
Ghiulle Phadric na 'n falm binn,  
'N teanntachd as moghadh 'nrabh 'n Fhionn  
O na ghineadh fiantachd Finn.

*Poem*, because it was addressed to one of these first Christian missionaries. We here see that this Culdee, whose name he was so fearful of disclosing, was no other than St. Patrick. This prefatory dialogue is omitted in the Perth edition.

FIN, at a feast at Almhuin<sup>c</sup>, in the age of heroes, forgot some of the Fians on the red hill, which excited their anger and resentment. " Since you did not admit us to the honor of the feast," said Maronnan of the sweet voice, " I and the noble Aldo with-  
" draw ourselves for a year from the service of Fin." They silently at their departure put their shields and swords on board their ships. The two noble chiefs went to the kingdom of Lochlin, of polished reins. The fair champions were for a year the friends of the king, the son of royal Connchar of sharp weapons, and Aldo who never refused a request. The queen of Lochlin of brown shields conceived a strong passion, which she could not conceal, for long-hair'd Aldo of arms. With him she carried her deceit into execution, and stole from the bed of the king.

THIS was a deed for which blood was spill'd. To Almhuin<sup>d</sup> of heroes, residence of the Fians, they took their voyage across the sea.

<sup>c</sup> This line is thus written in the copy of this poem preserved in the library of the university of Dublin,

*An d Almhuin le lin na laoch.*

See also the Perth edition, where it is written in the same manner. Almhuin, as we already have had occasion to observe, was the residence of Fin-mac-Cumhal in Leinster, where this feast was given, which excited the resentment of Aldo and Maronnan.

<sup>d</sup> This passage is thus written in the above-mentioned copy in the library of Dublin College:

*Aig fo an gníom far doirteadh fuil.*

*Go b' Almhuin Laigíon na b Fian,*

That is, " This was the deed for which blood was spill'd. To Almhuin in Leinster, residence of the Fians," &c. The corrupt orthography of the word *Almhuin* (see the Perth edition, p. 305) and also the similitude in sound between it and *Albin*, perhaps contributed to mislead Mr. Mc. Pherson, and induced him to conclude that by Almhuin, or Alb'ein, as it is sometimes written, was meant Albion, or Scotland, and not Fin's palace

Dearmad fleagha ga 'n d'roinn Fionn,  
 'Sa 'n Albin ri linn non laodhach,  
 Air cuid do 'n Fheinn shuos druim-dearg,  
 Gus 'n d'eirich fearg is fraoch.  
 Mu dhibhir fibh finne mu 'n ol,  
 Se dubhairt Macronain nan gloir binn,  
 Bheirramfa agus Ailde ùr  
 Breiteach bliadhna ri mur Finn.  
 Thog iad gu fibulte 'n triall  
 'N cloidheamh agus 'n fgiath air luing,  
 G'luais 'n dithift iarloch ur  
 Gu riochd Lochlunn na 'n friann fleom.  
 Muintearas bliadhna don riogh  
 Thug 'n dithift bu ghille cneas;  
 Mac riogh Connchar no 'n arm geur,  
 Agus Ailte nach d' ear neach.  
 Ghabh bannriogh Lochlunn no 'n fgiath donn  
 Trom-ghaol trom nach d' fheud i chleath  
 Air Ailte greanach no 'n arm  
 Gus n' d' eirich a chealg leis.  
 D' eirich i o leaba 'n riogh  
 Sud 'n gnìomh mu'n dhoirte fuil.  
 Gu h Albin laodhach no 'n Fiann,  
 Thogadar 'n triall thair muir.

palace in Leinster. This seems to be a common mistake amongst the Highland songsters. But in the poems before us the error of Mr. Mc. Pherfon is less excusable, as the king of Lochlin is represented steering his fleet boldly to the coasts of Ireland, and challenging the heroes of Innisfail. The infidelity, therefore, of the queen of Lochlin could not be said to have been the cause of spilling *Scottish* blood, since the scene of the whole transaction is laid in Ireland, and they are the heroes of Innisfail who fell in battle. The two lines above quoted are altered as follows in the Perth edition :

*Sud an gnìomh mu'n doirtear fuil,  
 'S a dh' ionnsuidh Flaitheas na'm Fionn, &c.*

That is, "This was the deed which occasioned the effusion of blood, and endangered  
 "the government of the Fians."

The king of Lochlin at that time was a man that obtained the victory in every contest—Erragon, the son of Annir of ships, a king well skilled in deeds of arms. The king collected his army, and a firm fleet, well furnished with stores. Nine princes joined their forces, a martial band of the men of Lochlin. They took an oath on their voyage that they would not return, and leave Fin behind them : But every sword is good 'till tried in combat.

\* THEY steered their fleet boldly to the coast of Ireland, and closely encamped their forces near to where Fin was surrounded with his warriors. A message came to Fin, a dreadful tale, that was the cause of sorrow to many—A challenge<sup>f</sup> to the chiefs of Innisfail upon the northern shore. We sent them the king's daughter of the blue eyes and white teeth,

\* This stanza is thus otherwise written in the edition of Perth, p. 306 :

*Thogadar an Albais ard,  
Seach crìocha Eirion nan colg teann,  
'S ann Albain leathann na 'm Fiann,  
Thugadar an Triath air traidh.*

That is, “ They raised up the lofty standard towards the coasts of Ireland of the  
“ strong swords, and brought the Prince (Erragon) on shore towards spacious Alm-  
“ huin

Bu riogh air Lochlunn fa 'n uair  
 Fear a bhuidhne buoigh gach blair,  
 Airgin mac Ainnir no 'n long,  
 A riogh bu mhaith lamh fa lann.  
 Chruinnich riogh Lochlunn a shluagh,  
 Caubhlauch cruoigh a bhi gu deas,  
 Gur he d'heirich, fa 'n aon uair,  
 Naogh righrigh fan fluogh leis.  
 Lochlannich a bhuidhean bhorb  
 ('S ro mhaith 'n colg gu dol 'n feum)  
 Thug iad a mionnan an 'nan triall  
 Nach pilleadh iad is Fionn no n ndeigh.  
 Stiuradar n caubhlach gu h'ard  
 Gu crich Eirin no n arm nochd,  
 Is leg iad am puibleach gu tiugh,  
 Gairid o 'n reutha 'n rabh Fionn.  
 Teachdaireachd thainig gu Fionn,  
 Sgeul tium a chuir ruinn go truogh,  
 Comhruag no 'n laodhach Innseadhphail  
 Fhaotin air 'ntraigh fa thuath.  
 Thug finne dhoibh inghin riogh,  
 'S guirme fiul fa s' gille deud,

"huin of the Fians." Almhuin is generally in the Irish romances called *Almhuin leathan mor Laigion*, that is, "The great and spacious Almhuin in Leinster."

' This line is thus written in the edition of Perth, p. 307, the word Innisfail being omitted:

*Combrag dluth d' Fhiannaibh Fhin.*

That is, "A challenge of the close combat to the Fians of Fin."

and sent with her an hundred horses; the best that ever were guided by a rein, mounted by an hundred horsemen clothed in fatten, shining like the sun. When she went down to the shore, she left the horses behind, and stepped forward to meet the men of Lochlin<sup>s</sup>. Two golden apples were in her right hand, and ornaments on the shoulder of her gown, and the form of a tree inwoven.

ERRAGON. "What tidings from the people of Fin, O maid  
"of the curled locks?"

MAID. "If thy wife has broken her marriage vow, and been  
"guilty of any disgraceful action, you are offered the friendship  
"of Fin. Thou shalt get me as an hostage for the performance;  
"and if thou accept the offer, then shalt thou obtain that friend-  
"ship, and an hundred horses, the best that ever were guided  
"by a rein, mounted by an hundred horsemen clothed in fatten,  
"shining like the sun. Thou shalt obtain these, and an hundred  
"girdles<sup>n</sup>; sickness cannot affect those whom they bind, they  
"stop pain and torture—a grateful present to pregnant women.

<sup>s</sup> Mr. Mc. Pherfon transmutes "*the two golden apples*" into *an arrow of gold*, and *a sparkling shell*; and then adds, in conformity to his system, without any authority from the original, that these were *the signs of Morwen's peace*.

<sup>n</sup> Mr.

Chuir finn, 'ga coimhdeachd, ceud each  
 As fearr ris n' deachadh frian,  
 Is ceud marcach air a muin,  
 Le 'n earradh froil o 'n laiste grian.  
 Nuair theirrin 'n fin air 'ntfraid,  
 Sa dfhag i no deigh na heich.  
 Thug i ceum 'n fin no 'n coir.  
 Is da ubhall oir air a laimh dheis,  
 Coinnlairean air 'ghuolneabh a guin,  
 Is dealbh a chruinn o chill no 'm port.

ERRAGON. " Gu de do nuaidheachd o phobull Fhinn,  
 " Innis duin a chiagh no n cleuchd."

CIODH. " Mu roinn do bhean ort beirt chlith,  
 " S gu d' immir i n' gnìomh gu cear,  
 " Cairdeas is commun ri Fionn,  
 " Is gu 'n faighe tu mi na geall.  
 " Gheibheadh tu fud is ceud each  
 " As fearr ris 'n deachidh frian ;  
 " Is ceud marcach air a muin  
 " Le 'n earradh froil o 'n laiste grian.  
 " Gheibheadh tu fud is ceud crios,  
 " Cha theid flios mu 'n 'd theid eug ;  
 " Chaisge iad leotrom is sgios,  
 " Deud riobhach no 'm bufchala bean.

" Mr. Mc. Pherson, in his note on this passage, tells us, that sanctified girdles, 'till very lately, were kept in many families in the north of Scotland, which were bound about women in labour, and were supposed to alleviate their pains, and to accelerate the birth.



“ You shall obtain these, and an hundred dishes which were laid  
 “ before the kings<sup>1</sup> of the world ; he whose food is served upon  
 “ them shall enjoy perpetual youth. You shall obtain these, and  
 “ an hundred ships that cleave the waves in the swelling tide,  
 “ with an hardy crew victorious in every battle. You shall obtain  
 “ these, and an hundred princes that acquire tribute in the se-  
 “ vere conflict. You shall obtain these, and an hundred fleet  
 “ hawks, victorious in the air. You shall obtain these, and an  
 “ hundred breeding mares, and as many white cattle as will fill  
 “ a valley. After obtaining these presents, take your wife, and  
 “ make peace with us.”

ERRAGON. “ I will not make peace with Aldo nor the nobles  
 “ of the Fians, until I make Fin my captive, and drive away his  
 “ cattle to the shore.”

MAID. “ I tell you, O Erragon, according to my judgment in  
 “ this matter, that whatever may be your strength, you will never  
 “ make Fin your captive, nor drive away his cattle to the shore.  
 “ But since my offers have been unwisely scorned, I return, and so  
 “ farewell.”

ERRAGON. “ O do not return, maid of the curled hair, gentle  
 “ princess of the sweet voice ; precious jewels shalt thou receive,  
 “ and I will bind myself to thy side for ever.”

MAID. “ I will return, O leader of these bands, since I cannot  
 “ assuage the fury of your revenge—since I cannot obtain the  
 “ pardon of the rash pair.”

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Mc. Pherson, in his note on this line, tells us, that by *the kings of the world* are meant *the Roman emperors*.

“ Gheibheadh tu fud is ceud mios,  
 “ O churfadh riogh n domhain aigh ;  
 “ Is ge be gheibheadh iad ri bheo  
 “ Dhianadh iad duin’ og a ghnath.  
 “ Gheibheadh tu fud is ceud long,  
 “ Sgoilte tonn air bhuinne borb ;  
 “ Air ’n luchdacha gu teann  
 “ Do gach aon ni sfearr buoigh.  
 “ Gheibheadh tu fud is ceud mac riogh,  
 “ Bhuidhne cios air chluicheadh bhuirb ;  
 “ Gheabheadh tu ceud feodhag shuairce  
 “ Air mbigha buoidh ’n iar.  
 “ Gheibheadh tu fin is ceud graoigh,  
 “ Is laon glinne do chroth baon.  
 “ Iar faoghin fin beannachd leat,  
 “ Tog do bheann is dean ruinn fith.”

ERRAGON. “ Cha d’ thugaimse fith do dh’ Ailte,  
 “ No mhaitheabh air Feinne gu leir,  
 “ Gun Fionn fein a chuir fuidh ’m bhreath,  
 “ Is a chreich a thabhairt gu traigh.”

CIODH. “ Cha d thug hufa leat do neart,  
 “ Dhinnfin duit a bhrioth mo bheachd,  
 “ Na chuirre Fionn fein fuidh ad bhreath  
 “ No na bheir a chreich gu traigh.  
 “ Ach falbhaidh mise is beannachd leat  
 “ O chuaithe t’fhaineachadh bundream.”

ERRAGON. “ Cha n fhalbh thufa chiagh no ’n cleuchd,  
 “ A Riobhin fharafta bheoil bhinn,  
 “ Gheibheadh tu no feuda faor,  
 “ Is cheamhluin mi fein ri d’ thaobh deafs.”

CIODH. “ Fhalbhaidh mise, cheann no ’n cliar,  
 “ O nach traogh mi t’fhioch no t’fhearg,  
 “ O nach faighinn faor gu mbhreith  
 “ Ceann no deise bu gann ciall.

THE king's daughter returned back, and rode to the palace of her father. Many were the silken standards that were lifted up, and soon were the Fians arrayed in order of battle.

SEVEN score of our chief warriors, and Aldo himself among the foremost, fell by the hand of the great Erragon, against whom the troops had armed.

\* WHEN Fin, who had long kept silence, saw the slaughter of his army, he was enraged. Much did he encourage the Fians. "Who will engage Erragon in battle, or shall we let him thus triumph over us unrevenged?" Then replied Gaul, the hardest warrior to subdue, "Let me oppose Erragon in the combat, and try the prowess of the hero."

FIN. "Take, O Gaul, Macanluth, and brown-haired Dermot, fair Ciaran, and Macanlo, to protect you from the wounds of the warrior—take two as a shield on either side."

EIGHT days, without cessation, the slaughter of our armies continued. Gaul, upon the ninth day, gained the head of the king of Lochlin of the brown shield. Not one escaped the edge of the sword, or returned exulting from the combat. Not one of the forces of the king of Lochlin returned home to his own land.

\* This stanza is thus written in the edition of Perth, p. 308 :

'Se labhair Fionn slath na 'm buadh,  
'Se 'g amharc air sluagh Innse-fail,  
Co dheangas Earragon fa ghreis,  
Mu 'n leigeamaid leis ar tair ?

Theandain i 'n fin riutha a cul,  
 Marcich e a chuir gu dian :  
 Bu hinar frol ga 'n togail fuas,  
 A nordabh gu luath chuaithe 'n Fhiann.  
 Seachd ficeud gar maitheabh gu leir,  
 Is Ailte fein air 'n tus,  
 Thuit fud le laimh Airgin mhoir  
 Mu 'n deacha no floigh 'n dlus.  
 D' fhuirich Fion fada na thofd,  
 Luidh sprog mor air 'n Fheinn.

FION. “ Co dheangas Airgin fa ghreis,  
 “ No 'n leigemid leis air tair.”  
 'Sann bha fhreagradh fud aig Goll,  
 'N fonn bha dochdoir ra chlaidh.  
 “ Leigeior mi is Airgin fa ghreis,  
 “ Gus 'n feachamid cleas-laoidh.”

FION. “ Maccan Luthichi, Diarmad donn,  
 “ Ciaran caom, is Mac-an-Leigh,  
 “ Gad dhianadh o bhuilleabh 'n laodhich,  
 “ Tog dithift air gach taobh mar fgeith.”  
 Ochd laithean duine gun tamh,  
 Sior dheanabh ar air no floigh ;  
 Cean in riogh Lochlunn no 'n fgiath donn  
 Se buidhin Goll air a naothaobh lath.  
 Mar duine chuaith as o bheal airm,  
 No chuaithe le maoim don ghreis ;  
 Do riogh Lochlunn no da fluogh  
 Cha deach duine ga thir fein.

That is, “ And thus spoke Fin, the prince of victory, when he saw the slaughter  
 “ of the army of Innisfail, Who will engage Erragon in the fight, or shall we  
 “ suffer him to bear away with him our disgrace ?” The host of Fin is here said  
 exprefsly to be the host of Innisfail.

Four score and five thousand men of renown fell by the hand of Gara and of Gaul, and two by the hand of Oscar of valiant deeds, and Carioll of the fair skin. But by the name you gave me, Patrick of sweet psalms, there fell by Fin and me as many as by the other four. There was slain in this battle near half the Fians upon the south-west shore ; but at the going down of the sun there was not more than a third of them that remained.

Ceithir fichead is coig mile fonn  
 Thuit le Garadh is le Goll ;  
 A dha urradh le Oscar an aigh  
 Is le Cairioll cneas bhan ;  
 Air a nainm a thugas orm,  
 G' ille Phadric no 'n falm binn,  
 Gun tuit leom fein is le Fionn,  
 A choimhlion ceann ris a cheathrann.  
 Thuit finne cor is leth air Fhiann,  
 Air 'n traigh tha fiar o dheas,  
 Ach no 'n luigeagh a ghrian  
 Cha mho no air trian a chuaith as.

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*The* PRAYER *of* OSSIAN<sup>a</sup>.

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1. OSSIAN. **R**ELATE the tale, O Patrick ; I beseech you, by the books that you read, tell me truly is Heaven in the possession of the noble Fians of Ireland<sup>b</sup>?

2. PATRICK. I assure you, O Ossian of great deeds, that Heaven is not in the possession of your father, nor of Oscar, nor of Gaul.

3. OSSIAN. This is a pitiful tale, O Patrick, that thou tellest me of my ancestors ; why should I be religious if Heaven be not in possession of the Fians of Ireland<sup>c</sup>?

<sup>a</sup> The copy of the *Urnigh Ossian* which fell into my hands differs from that published by Mr. Hill in the order of the stanzas (as I have signified by the prefixed numbers, which denote the order in Mr. Hill's copy) and some other circumstances, on which I shall make occasional observations in the notes. A very correct copy of this poem is preserved in the library of the university of Dublin, entitled "*Agallamb Oisín agus Phadruig*;" that is, "The Conversation of Ossian and St. Patrick."

<sup>b</sup> The Highland Sgeulaiches have been very busy in corrupting this poem, partly of necessity, from their want of a written standard. Hence also the order and connection

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U R N I G H O S S I A N.

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1. OSSIAN. **I** N N I S fgeul a Phadruic,  
 An n' onair do leibh,  
 Bheil neamh gu aridh  
 Aig maithibh Fianibh Eirin ?
2. PATRICK. Bheirimfa dhuit briartha,  
 Offain na 'n glonn,  
 Nach bheil neimh ag t'aithar,  
 Aig Oskar na ag Gobhul.
3. OSSIAN. 'S olc an fgeul, a Phadruic,  
 A thagad dhamh ri leibhibh,  
 Com an bithimse re crabha,  
 Mar bheil neimh aig Fionnibh Eirin.

rection of the poem, both in this copy and Mr. Hill's, have been much injured, as may be seen by comparing the Erse with the Irish. And from their vain desire of attributing Fin-ma-Cual and his heroes to Scotland, they seem to have *intentionally* corrupted it in some passages, as may be seen by comparing the Erse copies with each other. Thus, in the verse before us, the word *Ireland* is omitted in Mr. Hill's copy.

\* In this verse also the mention of *Ireland* is omitted in Mr. Hill's copy.



8. PATRICK. O Offian<sup>d</sup>! long sleep has taken hold of thee, rise to hear the psalms. Thy strength and thy valour are gone, nor art thou longer able to stand the fury of the day of battle.

9. OSSIAN. If I have lost my strength and my valour, and none of Fingal's heroes survive, I will pay little respect to thy clerkship, nor care I to listen to thy finging.

10. PATRICK. Such sweet songs as mine thou never heardst 'till this night since the beginning of the world; thou aged and unwife old man, who often hast arranged thy valiant troops upon the mountain.

11. OSSIAN. Often have I arranged the valiant troops upon the mountain, O Patrick of evil designs; but it is wrong in you to dispraise my appearance, which once was not despised.

15. Fin had twelve hounds<sup>e</sup>; we let them loose in the vallies of Smail; and sweeter to my ears was the cry of the hounds, than the ringing of thy bells, O clerk.

17. PATRICK. Since it was the height of thy happiness to listen to the hounds, and to marshal thy troops every day, and not to offer up thy prayers to God, Fin and his heroes are for this bound in captivity.

18. OSSIAN. It is hard to believe thy tale, O clerk of the white book, that Fin, or one so generous, should be in captivity with God or man.

<sup>d</sup> Here the order and connection is disturbed. This is the first stanza in the Irish copies.

<sup>e</sup> This

8. PATRICK. Offain gur fadda do shuain,  
Erich fuas as eifd na failm ;  
Chail u nife do lu as do rath,  
As cha chuir u cath ri la garbh.

9. OSSIAN. Mu chail mise mo lu 'fmo rath,  
'S nach marthain aon cath bh' aig Fion,  
Dod chlerfenachd 's beag mo speis,  
'S do cheol eifdeachd cha neach liom.

10. PATRICK. Cha chualadh u co-maith mo cheol  
O thus an domhuin mhoir gus anochd,  
Tha u aofda anna-glic liath,  
Fir a dhioladh cleor ar chnochd.

11. OSSIAN. 'S trigh a dhiol mi cliar air chnochd,  
Gh' ille Phadruic ab' olc run,  
Be-coir dhuit achain mo chruth,  
O nach dfhuair me' guth air thus.

15. Bha da gaothair dheug aig Fionn,  
'S leighadhmid ad re gleann Smail,  
'Sbu bhinneadh luinn profnadh air con  
Na do chluigfe chlerich chai.

17. PATRICK. Se mead ar meothair ri profnadh chonn,  
'S ri dhiobhail fgoll goch aon la,  
'S nach lugadh fibh oraindo Dhia,  
Tha Fionn na Fiann annife an laimh.

18. OSSIAN. 'S olc a chreidas mi do fgeul,  
A chleirich, le 'd leobhar bann,  
Gu bithad Fionn, na co-fial,  
Aig duine na aig Dia an laimh.

\* This verse is abruptly introduced, and is not connected with the preceding part of the poem. We must look to the Irish copies for the remedy of the corruption.

19. PATRICK. He is now in captivity in Hell, who used to distribute gold; since he did not give honour to God, he is in sorrow in the house of torture.

20. OSSIAN. If the clan of Boifgnè were alive, and the descendants of Mornè of valiant deeds, we would force Fin out of Hell, or the house would be our own.

21. PATRICK. Although the five<sup>f</sup> provinces of Ireland, which you so highly esteem, were to assist you, you would not force Fin out of Hell, nor would the house ever be your own.

21. OSSIAN. What kind of a place is this Hell, O Patrick of deep learning? Is it not as good as Heaven; and shall we not there find deer and hounds?

6. PATRICK. Little as is the humming<sup>s</sup> fly, or the mote in the sun, it cannot get under the cover of his shield without the knowledge of the king of glory.

7. OSSIAN. Then he is not like Fin-ma-Cual, our king of the Fians; every man upon the face of the earth might enter his court without asking permission.

30. PATRICK. Compare not any man to God, O grey-haired old man, who knowest not what he is. Long is it since his government began, and his right will live for ever.

<sup>f</sup> The Highland Sgeulaiches have taken the liberty of totally perverting this stanza, and changing it into another, which might make Fin-ma-Cual their own countryman. See Mr. Hill's copy.

<sup>s</sup> This

19. PATRICK. Tha e n' ithuirne an laimh,  
Fear le mo gnath bhi pronnadh oir,  
O nach tugadh e onair do Dia  
Chuir e an tigh pian fuidh 'bhron.

20. OSSIAN. Na bithad clanna Baofga asteach,  
'S clanna Moran na feachd treun,  
Bherrmuid Fionn amach ar,  
No bhith an teach aguin fein.

21. PATRICK. Cuig do chuigibh na h Eirin maifeach,  
Air leatfa gu ba mhoir ann luchd,  
Cha dugadh sibh Fionn amach,  
'S cha bhith an teach aguibh fein.

22. OSSIAN. Gu de an tait ithuirne fein,  
A Phadruic leibhas an fgoll,  
Nach comaith e ri flaitheas De?  
Na faithmid ann feidh agus conn?

6. PATRICK. Ga beag a chuil chronanach,  
As monaran na greine,  
Gun fhios don righ mhoralach,  
Cha theid finn fuidh bhla a fgeith'.

7. OSSIAN. Cha bennin e 'f Fionnmacuil,  
An righ bha igin air na Fianibh,  
Ghaothaon neach ar talamh  
Dol na thalla sin gu iàrridh.

30. PATRICK. Na comhaid 'ufa duine ri Dia,  
A shean fhior liath, na breinneach e,  
'S fada bhun a thainig a reachd,  
'S marfhidh e cheart gu brath.

8 This passage seems to have been corrupted. In the Irish copies Ossian says that he would force his way into Heaven; St. Patrick, in reply, shews him his mistake, for that the smallest atom could not get there without God's knowledge and permission.

31. OSSIAN. I would compare Fin-ma-Cual to God himself.  
 . . . . .

33. PATRICK. This it is that has occasioned thy ruin; thy not having believed in the God of the elements. For this, not one of thy race has survived except thyself, the noble Ossian.

34. OSSIAN. This was not the cause of our misfortunes, but the two voyages of Fin to Rome; we were obliged, by ourselves, to engage in the battle of Gabhra, and great was the slaughter of the Fians.

23. One day, as we were on the mountain Fuad, Caolt of the steel sword was there, and Osgar, and the hospitable Fin. Loud was the cry of the hounds in the plain, and furious were they in the vallies.

24. Fin-ma-Cual of great strength was king over us at that time; and, O clerk of the crooked staff, we would not suffer God to rule over us.

4. PATRICK. <sup>b</sup> How wicked is that, O Ossian, thou man of blasphemous words! God is for ever greater than all the heroes of Ireland.

5. OSSIAN. I would prefer one great battle fought by Fin and his heroes to the Lord of thy worship, and to thyself, O clerk.

35. PATRICK. Listen to the advice of the humble, and seek Heaven for thyself to-night; thou art now sinking under years, therefore at length lay aside thy folly, O grey-haired old man.

<sup>b</sup> The Scottish Sgeulaich has in this instance transmuted *Ireland* into *Scotland*, in conformity to his corruptions in other passages. See Mr. Hill's copy.

31. OSSIAN. Chomaidinfe Fionmacuil

Ri aon Du . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . .

33. PATRICK. Se finn a chuiras duibh riamh,  
 Nach do chreid fuibh Dia non dul ;  
 Cha mharin duine ar air fliochd,  
 'S cha bheo ach rioghachd Offain air.

34. OSSIAN. Cha be fin bu ceoireach rinn,  
 Ach turas Fhionn a dha an Roimh,  
 Bho cumail cath arridh lein fein,  
 Bha cluidh ar Feinne gu ro mhor.

23. La dhuinne air fliabh bhoid,  
 Bha Caoilte ann bu cruaidh lann,  
 Bha Ofgar ann as Fionn na fleadh,  
 Domhnal bhon mheadh fraoch bhonn gleann.

24. Fionmacuil bu mor prios,  
 Bha e na righ orn fan am,  
 'S chlerich na bachall fiar,  
 Cha leigmid Dia os air ceann.

4. PATRICK. 'S borb leann fin uait, Offain,  
 Fhior na briathra boille,  
 Gum b' fear Dia air uair  
 Na Fianuibh Eirin uile.

5. OSSIAN. B fhear liomfa aon cath laidir  
 A churri Fiann na Feinne,  
 Na tighearna a chrabhidh  
 Agus 'ufa a chlerich.

35. PATRICK. Eifdh ufa raidh na bochd,  
 As iar neimh anochd dhuit fein,  
 Tha u nise air dol an aois,  
 Tog ad bhaos a shean fhir liath.

36. OSSIAN. I ask the protection of the twelve apostles for myself to-night; and if I have committed any heavy sins, let them be thrown into my grave upon the hill<sup>i</sup>.

<sup>i</sup> It is of this poem that Mr. Mc. Pherson, having ingeniously metamorphosed St. Patrick Mac Alpin into Mac Alpin a Culdee, seems to speak in the following manner, in his dissertation on Ossian's poems: "It was with one of the Culdees," says he, "that Ossian, in his extreme old age, is said to have disputed concerning the Christian religion. This dispute is still extant, and is couched in verse, according to the custom of the times. The extreme ignorance on the part of Ossian of the Christian tenets shews that that religion had only been lately introduced, as  
" it

36. OSSIAN. Comrich an da abstoil deug  
Iarruidh mi dhamh fein anochd  
'S ma rinn mi peacadh trom,  
Bighadh e n' luigh fan tom 'n cnochd.

“ it is not easy to conceive how one of the first rank could be totally unacquainted  
“ with a religion that had been known for any time in the country.” Mr. Ewing  
Cameron, in his elegant version of Mc. Pherfon, observes that the obsolete phrases  
and expressions peculiar to the age prove this poem to be no forgery. And if so,  
a considerable part at least of Mc. Pherfon's Ossian must have a contrary judgment  
passed on it.



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*The* D E A T H *of* O S C A R<sup>a</sup>.

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OSSIAN. **I** WILL<sup>b</sup> not refuse the song, though it be sorrowful to-night to Ossian.

OSCAR and the valiant Cairbre both fell in the battle of Gabhra<sup>c</sup>. The poisoned spear is in the hand of Cairbre, which he shakes in the hour of his wrath. The raven says with anguish that the hour of Oscar's death is come. "I," cries he to himself, "am the black ill-boding raven. Those five men at the table are joyful, without the fear of battle. Early in the morning will the raven prey upon thy cheek in the field of battle."

OSCAR. "Let not the Fians hear you to-night, lest we should all be dispirited."

<sup>a</sup> The death of Oscar, in the first book of Temora, is grounded on this poem; and many passages of it are indeed literally translated: But great liberties, as usual, have been taken with the original. See the edition of Perth, page 313.

<sup>b</sup> We are to suppose that Ossian had been solicited to give an account of the death of his son, and that the poem opens with his reluctant consent. This appears evident from the copy of the *Cath Gabhra*, preserved in the library of Dublin college, which begins in this manner:

---

M A R B H - R A N N O S C A I R.

---

**C**H A 'n abir mi athriath ri m' cheol,  
 Ga hól le Oífein e a nochd :  
 Óscar agus Cairbre calma,  
 Thraoghte iad uille 'n cath Ghabhruidh.  
 'N tleagh nimhe is i 'n laimh Chairbre,  
 Gu 'n craite i ri uair feirge.  
 Theirre 'n fiach ri ghoimh  
 Gur h ann leatha mhairbhthe Óscar.  
 'S miosa, theirre e ris fein,  
 'N fiach duth na mi-cheil ;  
 A chuigear a ta sibh mu 'n chlar  
 Ach fuil fir a bhi ga thacadh.  
 Gairridh 'n fiach moch a maireach  
 Air do ghruoighfe ann fan ar-fhaich.  
 OSCAR. “ Na cluinneadh 'n Fhein u nochd  
 “ Mu 'm bi fuinn uille gu mearfneach.”

*Mor anocht mo chumbadb fein,  
 A Padraic, gidh taim dod reir,  
 A smuaigneadh an chatba chruaidh  
 Tugsam is Cairbre caomb-chruaidh.*

That is, “ Great, to-night, is my sorrow, Oh ! Patrick, though I yield to your  
 “ request, when I think on the severe battle which we and the valiant Cairbre  
 “ fought.”

° Gabhra, in Meath, about half a mile from the hill of Tara. This battle was  
 fought A. C. 296. See annals of Innisfallen

CAIRBRE. "Exchange<sup>d</sup> the head of the spear, but keep the  
" stem."

OSCAR. "It is unjust to make this demand. But you ask  
" it because the Fians and my father are not here."

CAIRBRE. "Although the Fians and your father were here,  
" as they were the best day of their lives, I would insist by my  
" authority on obtaining whatever I should demand."

OSCAR. "If the Fians and my father were here in half their  
" prime, we would by force prevent you from possessing the  
" breadth of one foot of Ireland."

THEN red-haired Cairbre uttered furious words, that he would hunt and drive cattle from Almhuin<sup>e</sup> the following day. The valiant, the noble Oscar replied, in words equally furious, that he would hunt and drive cattle to Almhuin the following day. All that night 'till day, while the chiefs of the Fians banqueted, angry words on either side passed between Cairbre and Oscar. We and our valiant host arose the next day, and carried off the cattle of Ireland, twelve from every province.

<sup>d</sup> Mr. Mc. Pherson says it was usual at their feasts for the host and his guest to exchange spears. He here makes Cairbre call Oscar "son of woody Morven," without any authority from the original, in order to support his indefensible fiction, that Ossian was of that country. This, however, is but *the slight addition of an epithet*, as Doctor Blair terms it, in his elegant dissertation on the authenticity of these poems.

<sup>e</sup> In the original it is spell'd *Albin*, and sometimes in Erse poetry it is written *Albbein* and *Almbun*. In the edition of Perth, page 316, it is written *Albin*, and in page 305, *Albhainn* and *Almhain*. *Almbuin*, now the hill of Allen, was the palace of Fin and Ossian in Leinster, as we have already observed, and is not many miles distance from Tara; so that Cairbre could easily put his threat in execution, of making an incursion, the next day, into the territories of Fin. It was the corrupt orthography

CAIRBRE. " Iumlaid cin gun uimlaid croinn."

OSCAR. " B' ea-corach fud iarruidh oirn :

" Se fath mu n' iarradh tu fin,

" Mife bhi gun Fhiann gun athair."

CAIRBRE. " Gad bhig an Fhiann agus t' athair,

" 'N lath is fear a bha iad nam beatha,

" Cha bfuillear leomfa, ri m' linn,

" Gach feoid ad iarruin gu 'n faighe."

OSCAR. " Nam bigh 'n Fhiann agus m' athair

" Mar a bha iad no 'n leath bheatha,

" 'Steann as nach faigheadh tu fin,

" Aon lead do throighe do m' Eirinn."

Briarthadh buon fin, briarthadh buon,

Se bheirre 'n Cairbre ruogh,

Gun tugadh e fealg agus creach

A Albin 'n lath na mhaireach.

Briartha oille 'n aghaidh fin,

Bheirre 'n t Oscar gle calma,

Gun tugadh e fealg agus creach

Do dh Albin 'n lath na mhaireach.

N oidche fin duinne gu lo

Maithean air Feinne ag ol,

Briartha garga leath ar leath

Eadar Cairbre is an t Oscar.

Dh'eirich fuinn 'n lath na mhaireach,

Ar fluagh uill ann fin na bha dh' inn

Thogadh linn a h Eirin creach,

A dha dheug as gach cogabh.

orthography of the word, as one might suppose, which misled Mr. Mc. Pherfon, when he said, that " the author of these poems represents Oscar to have been of " Scotland." And in order still farther to countenance this opinion, if indeed he really adopted it, he forged the following line :

*Albin na 'n ioma fluagh.*

That is, " Almhain of many waves;" which never yet was seen in any copy of this poem found either in Scotland or Ireland. Compare this copy with those printed in Perth, page 167 and page 313; and also with that given in Mr. Gillies's specimen, printed at Perth 1786.

OSCAR. “ O woman<sup>f</sup>, that wasthest those garments, foretell  
 “ us truly what is to happen; shall any of our foes fall by us,  
 “ or shall we all fall unrevenged?

MAID. “ You shall slay five hundred, and wound the king  
 “ himself, together with him who is next to him in dignity: but  
 “ all your lives<sup>g</sup> have come.”

OSCAR. “ Let not Rofg-Mac-Ruo hear you, nor any of our  
 “ enemy; let not the Fians hear you to-night, lest we should be  
 “ all dispirited.”

WHEN we came to a narrow pass in a narrow vale, there was  
 the valiant Cairbre with his host coming to oppose us. Five score  
 brave Scots<sup>h</sup>, that came over the rocky rough sea, fell on the  
 opposite side by Oscar, as he rushed on toward the king of Ireland.  
 Five score heroes with blue swords, who never before moved one  
 step backward, fell on the opposite side by Oscar, as he rushed  
 on toward the king of Ireland. Five score heroes armed with  
 bows, who came to the assistance of Cairbre, fell on the opposite  
 side by Oscar, as he rushed on toward the king of Ireland.

<sup>f</sup> Oscar is here supposed, whilst marching off with his booty, to meet a young  
 woman early in the morning, whom he conceives endued with the gift of prophecy.  
 It is an opinion still prevailing in Ireland, that the first woman you meet with in the  
 morning is a witch.

*g Al*

[ III ]

OSCAR. “ A bhaobh a nigheas ’n teadach,  
 “ Dian dhuin ’n fhaisneachd cheudna ;  
 “ ’N tuit aon duinne aca leinn ?  
 “ No ’n d theit finn uille do neomh-ni ?”

BAOBH. “ Mairbhear leatfa a cuig ceud,  
 “ Is gunthar leat ’n riogh fein,  
 “ Maraon fann fear lagha dheth,  
 “ Is air faoghal uille gun a thainic.”

OSCAR. “ Na cluinne e u Rosg Mac Ruoigh,  
 “ Na aon duinne uaith ga fhluogh,  
 “ Na cluinne ’n Fhein u nochd,  
 “ Ma ’m bi fin uille gu mearfneach.”

Nuair thanic finne ann,  
 Bealach cuthinn no ’n caol ghleann,  
 Sann a bhig ’n Cairbre glan,  
 Le lonmaireachd a teachd n’ar co-thail.  
 Cuig fichead Albanach ard  
 Thanic thair muir choiriaganda ghairbh,  
 Thuit fud le laimh Ofsair thall,  
 Is e mosgladh gu riogh no h Eirinn.  
 Cuig fichead fear cloidheamh glais,  
 Nach deach aon cheum riomh air ais,  
 Thuit fud le laimh Ofsair thall,  
 Is e mosgladh gu riogh no h Eirinn.  
 Cuig fichead fear bogha,  
 Thanic air Cairbre ga cabhair,  
 Thuit fud le laimh Ofsair thall,  
 Is e mosgladh gu riogh no h Eirinn.

‡ *All your lives have come.* The Fians never recovered their defeat at Gabhra.

\* This passage shews that Oscar could not have been of Scotland ; and confirms our former observation, that *Albin* is a corruption of *Albhein*, *Almbain*, or *Almbuin* ; for it is absurd to suppose that Oscar would have thus slaughtered his own countrymen.

Five score men well acquainted with danger, who came against us from the snowy country, fell on the opposite side by the hand of Oscar, as he rushed on toward the king of Ireland. Five score of the chiefs of the army of red-haired Cairbre fell by the hand of Oscar, as he rushed on against the king of Ireland. When dark-red Cairbre saw the slaughter of his armies by Oscar, he hurled the poisoned spear that was in his hand against him. Oscar fell upon his right knee—the poisoned spear passed through his body, but he pierced Cairbre with a nine-barbed spear where the hair and forehead unite.

CAIRBRE. “ Rise, Art, and take thy sword, and stand up in  
“ the place of thy father ; if thou survivest the battle, may you  
“ reign a fortunate king over Ireland.”

OSCAR hurled another spear on high (as we thought it was high enough); so great was the force with which it was cast, that it struck Art to the ground as he was aiming his spear at Oscar. They placed the king's crown upon the stump of a tree, to shew that the victory was theirs.

<sup>i</sup> According to the prophecy of the witch, that he should wound the person next to the king in dignity.

Cuig fichead fear feachd,  
 Thanic oirn a tir 'n t' fhneachdi,  
 Thuit fud le laimh Ofsair thall,  
 Is e mosgladh gu riogh no h Eirinn.  
 Cuig fichead Cairbirre ruogh,  
 Thanic do mhaitheabh 'n 't fluoigh  
 Thuit fud le laimh Ofsair thall,  
 Is e mosgladh gu riogh no h Eirinn.  
 A chuig fhear a b' aifge do 'n riogh,  
 Air linne gu mo mhor 'm pris,  
 Thuit fud le laimh Ofsair thall,  
 Is e mosgladh gu riogh no h Eirinn.  
 Nuair chunnig 'n Cairbre ruogh,  
 'N t' Ofsar a fgathagh a fhluoigh,  
 'N tleagh nimhe bha no laimh,  
 Gu'n do leig e fud na cho-thail.  
 Thuit Ofsar air a ghlun deas,  
 'San 'n tleagh nimhe treamh a chneas,  
 Gun do chuir e fleagh no naoidh feannadh,  
 Mu chummadh fhuilt agus eadin.

CAIRBRE. " Eirich Art is glac do chloidheamh,  
 " Seafabh fuas an aite t' athair,  
 " Mu thig u beo o na cathabh  
 " Gu mu riogh rath u air Eirinn."  
 Thug e urchair eille 'nairde,  
 (Air linn fein bu leoir a h airde)  
 Leagadh leis aig mead a chuimfe  
 Art mac Cairbre air an agh urchair.  
 Chuir iad crun 'n riogh mu 'n cheap,  
 Chum fgu mbuinnte leogh an arach.



He reared a firm and even mound on the red side of the hill,  
and broke the king's crown upon the stump of a tree, the last  
action of my valiant son.

OSCAR. "Lift me up now, ye Fians, never did you lift me  
"up before; carry me to the sunny hills, and take off my gar-  
"ments."

"Oh! son of victory, death has come upon you—the second  
"wound has not told a falsehood. The ships<sup>k</sup> of your grand-  
"father are at hand; they come to our assistance."

ALL the Fians saluted Fin, though he did not salute us. He  
came to the hill of tears, where lay Oscar of the sharp sword.

FIN. "Oh! my son, you were in greater danger on the day  
"of the battle of Dundalgin<sup>1</sup>; when the healing herbs were  
"applied to your wounds, it was my hand that effected your  
"cure."

OSCAR. "My cure is now past your skill, nor will it ever be  
"accomplished. Cairbre has wounded me with his seven-barbed  
"spear between the navel and kidney; and I pierced him with  
"my nine-barbed spear where the hair joins the forehead—the  
"physician will never heal the wound that my hand inflicted."

<sup>k</sup> At the time of the battle of Gabhra, Fin is said to have been on a voyage to Rome (see the *Urnigh Ossian*, stanza 34); he is here represented by the poet as just returning from thence.

<sup>1</sup> Now

Thog e leachdag chomhnart chruaigh,  
 Bhar no talmhuin taobh ruoigh,  
 Bhrift e crun riogh mu 'n cheap,  
 Gniomh mu dheirre ma dheagh mhic.

OSCAR. “ Togabh libh mi a niofe Fhiann,  
 “ Cha do thog fibh mi roimh riomh,  
 “ Togaibh mi gu tullich ghloin,  
 “ Is thugabh dhìom 'n t' eadach.”

“ Marbhaifg ort a mhic a buoth  
 “ Nì u breug 'n darra h uair.  
 “ Luingeas do sheanathar at' an  
 “ Is i thighin le cabhair chuginn.”

Bheannuich fuinn uille do Fhionn,  
 Ga ta cha do bheannuich dhuinn,  
 Ach gun d'tainig fuinn tullich nan deur,  
 Far 'n rabh Oscar na 'n arm gheur.

FIN. “ 'S miofa mhic a bhith tu dheth,  
 “ Lath catha Duna-dealgun,  
 “ Shnamhagh no curran triomh d'chneas,  
 “ 'Si mo lamh a roinn do leigheas.”

OSCAR. “ Mo leighas cha nbheil e 'n fath,  
 “ Nì mo dhianar e gu brath,  
 “ Chuir Cairbre fleagh no 'n feachd feanadh  
 “ Eadar m' airnean agus m' iumleag.  
 “ Chuir mise fleagh na naodh feannadh  
 “ Mu chummagh fhuilt agus eaduin  
 “ Nan ruige mo dhuirn a chneas,  
 “ Cha deanadh no leigh a leigheas.”

FIN. “ Oh ! my son, you were in greater danger on the day  
“ of the battle of Benedin<sup>m</sup> ; when the healing herb was applied  
“ as the fálve to your wounds, it was my hand that effected  
“ your cure.”

OSCAR. “ My cure is now past your skill, nor will it ever be  
“ accomplished ; I am wounded in my right side, and my wound  
“ is incurable by the physician.”

WE lifted the noble Oscar high upon our shields, and carried him away with care, until we came to the house<sup>a</sup> of Fin. The howling of the dogs by our side, the groans of the aged chiefs, the lamentation of all the Fians. It was this that afflicted my heart. No mother lamented her son, nor one brother for another, but each of us that was present wept for Oscar .

<sup>m</sup> Now Howth.

<sup>a</sup> Almuin, the palace of Fin, is not many miles distance from Gabhra.

<sup>o</sup> The subsequent stanza follows here in the edition of Perth, page 321, which I insert, as it adds one more to the many arguments already adduced from poems still current in the Highlands, that Ireland was the country of Oscar :

*Bas Ofsair a chradh mo chridh !*

*Triath fear Eirinn 's mor d' ar di ;*

*Cait am facas riamh, re d' linn,*

*Fear co cruaidh ruit air chul lainn ?*

That is, “ The death of Oscar grieved my heart ; our loss is great in the prince of  
“ the chiefs of Ireland. When in my time have I ever seen a man so valiant as  
“ you behind a sword ?”

And in another very beautiful and pathetic, but mutilated, poem on this subject, published as a specimen by Mr. Gillies of Perth, he is also called “ the prince of  
“ Ireland :”

*B.15*

FIN. “ 'S miosa mhic a bhi tu dheth,  
 “ Lath catha Bein-eudin,  
 “ Shnamhagh na geoidh troimh do chneas,  
 “ 'Si mo lamh a roinn do leigheas.”

OSCAR. “ Mo leigheas cha 'n bheil e 'n fath,  
 “ Ni mo dhianar e gu brath,  
 “ Gaimh 'n donach 'm thaobh deas  
 “ 'S dorrite do leigh mo leigheas.”  
 Thog fuinne air 'n Oscar aluin,  
 Air bharradh air fgiath an airde,  
 Thug finn as iomchara grinn,  
 Gus an e' thainig finn tigh Fheinn.  
 Donnalich na 'n con rir taobh,  
 Mar ri buireadh no 'n fean laoch,  
 Is gul an Fhian uile mu 'n feach,  
 Gur be fud a chruigh mi nchriodhe.  
 Cha choineadh bean a mac fein,  
 Ni mo chaoineadh a bhraithear e,  
 A mhiad fha bha finne 'n fin,  
 Bha fuinn uille caoinedh Oscar.

*Bas Ofsair 's e chradh mo chridh',*

*Triath fir Eirinn ur-bhuidh' :*

That is, “ The death of Oscar grieved my heart ; the prince of the heroes of fertile  
 “ Ireland.”

And, in the same specimen, the Fians of Ireland are introduced bewailing his loss :

*Mo thruagibe finn, Ofsair fheil,*

*Ma fear thusa 'nochd rium fein,*

*Guilidh mi am feasgl gu tiom,*

*Is coisnidh uile Fhian Eirinn.*

That is, “ Woe is me, O generous Oscar ; if thou departest from me this night, I  
 “ shall lament as long as I am in being, and all the Fians of Ireland will be  
 “ mournful.”

A very correct copy of this poem is preserved in the library of the university of  
 Dublin.

FIN. "Oscar, my beloved, beloved by my beloved, son of  
" my son, mild and valiant, my heart pants over thee like a  
" black-bird ! Never more shall Oscar arise !"

FIN did not banish this great sorrow from his soul from that day to the hour of his death ; nor would he take, were it offered to him, the third part of the whole world in comparison of his loss <sup>p</sup>.

<sup>p</sup> The cause of this battle, in which Oscar was slain, assigned in the copy of the *Cath Gabhra* preserved in the library of Dublin College, was not a private quarrel between Cairbre and Oscar, as represented in this poem and the first book of *Temora*, but the repentment of Cairbre and the Irish princes in general for the improper conduct of the Fians. And this latter account of the matter is confirmed by an extract from the Book of Howth, preserved in the library of Dublin College, which I here subjoin, as it throws some light on the nature of the order of these Fians, and their duty :

" In Ireland there were foldiers, called Fyn Erin, appointed to keep the sea coasts,  
" fearing foreign invasion or foreign princes to enter the realme. The names of  
" these foldiers were Fin M'Cuil, Coloilon, Keilte, Oscar Mac Offeyn, Dermot  
" O Doyn, Collemagh Mornè, and diverse others. These foldiers waxed bold, as  
" shall appear hereafter at length, and so strong, that they did contrary to the orders  
" and institutions taken by the kings of Ireland, their chiefs and governors, and be-  
" came very strong and stout, and at length would do more things than themselves  
" without licence of the kings of the land. Part of their misdeameanors was, they  
" charged all the commons of Ireland that they should not hunt without their  
" special license ; and if they did, they should pay after this value, for a hare's kill-  
" ing xx<sup>d</sup>, for a water-dog killing double as much, and so after that rate, doubling  
" still

“ Mo laogh fein u, laogh mo laoigh,  
 “ Leanabh mo leinabh, ghil chaomh,  
 “ Mo chroidhe liumnich mar lon,  
 “ Gu lath bhrath cha n’ eirich Ofsar.”  
 Cha do chuir Fionn deth chriogh mor-ghrain,  
 O’n latha fin gu lath a bhais ;  
 Cha ghabhadh e, cha bu d thigeadh leis,  
 Trian d’an bheatha ge d’ abruinn.

“ ftill as the game was, as the fox, the wolfe, the deer, and all other paffimes. Such  
 “ diforders they kept, that the kings did afsemble together, that they would banifh  
 “ them the kingdom, and fo fent them word; who made anfwer that they would  
 “ not, unlefs they were put out by battle. And fo thefe foldiers fent to Denmark  
 “ for their king’s fon, with a thoufand tall worthy foldiers as ever croffed the feas  
 “ before that time to Ireland. And fo the day of battle was appointed. At which  
 “ time all the kings of Ireland did prepare againft that day of battle to the number  
 “ of . . . . M and five. The number of foldiers and ftrangers was xxviii M, and  
 “ vii C Danes of Norway. The place of the battle was at Burne-vegein in Mauga-  
 “ then, in Meath appointed. But thefe ftrangers thought themfelves fo ftrong and  
 “ apt for battle, they made hafte to come to fight, and came to Ardrath againft  
 “ the kings; who made hafte alfo, and came to Garefton, and they, perceiving their  
 “ enemies fo nigh, embattail themfelves there; and after kifled the ground, and gave  
 “ a great cry, as their manner was, of which cry that name was given Balli-garva.  
 “ The order of the battle was this: Thofe foldiers placed themfelves by the S. W.  
 “ the hill of Ardrath in one great battail, &c. The iffue was, all the foreigners  
 “ were flain, faving one called Offein, who was alive ’till St. Patrick’s coming, who  
 “ told that holy man of all their doings,” &c.